

VEHICLE ARTICLE CARRIER HAVING STOWABLE CROSS BARS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

*099
5/26/05*

[0001] This application is a continuation-in-part of pending U.S. Serial No. 10/279,285, filed October 24, 2002, ^{now U.S. Patent No. 6,811,066.} ~~and presently pending.~~

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field

[0002] The present invention generally relates to vehicle article carriers such as luggage racks and, more particularly, to a vehicle article carrier having crossbars operable in a first or stowed mode oriented parallel to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle and in a second or article carrying mode oriented perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle.

2. Discussion

[0003] Modern automotive vehicles are commonly equipped with article carriers such as luggage racks for supporting various articles externally of the vehicle. Most vehicle article carriers include a pair of siderails laterally spaced apart on the vehicle roof (or trunk) and aligned parallel to the longitudinal axis of the vehicle. Most vehicle article carriers also include two or more crossbars laterally spanning the space between the siderails. The crossbars work in conjunction with the siderails to provide anchor points for securing articles to the carrier.

[0004] While such vehicle article carriers perform excellently in terms of article support and the like, there is still room for improvement. For example, vehicle article carrier crossbars can sometimes contribute to wind noise audible